

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 18, 2019  
**ITEM:** No. 2 - 1:45 pm  
**FROM:** Katrina Braehmer, Project Planner

**SUBJECT:** File No.: **DRH19-0007; NeilMed Warehouse**  
Applicant: Ken DiLillo, on behalf of NeilMed Pharmaceuticals Inc.  
Address: 685 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa  
APN(s): 059-340-056

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REQUEST

Ken DiLillo, on behalf of NeilMed Pharmaceuticals Inc., requests preliminary design review for construction of a new two-story, 59,066-square foot warehouse building with two loading docks on a 1.53-acre parcel. Other site improvements include paved parking and circulation areas, landscaping, and site lighting.

BACKGROUND

The 1.53-acre parcel is zoned MP (Industrial Park), which allows industrial warehouse uses by right. The site is located down a private road off of Aviation Boulevard, within the Airport Business Center and the purview of the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan. The site is mostly undeveloped, with the exception of a paved parking area along the southern edge of parcel, which is utilized by the neighboring parcel via a parking and access easement. The site and the parcel to the south were originally a single lot, prior to its subdivision in 1998. The minor subdivision was approved jointly with a use permit for planned development status to allow for future construction of two industrial buildings, one on each lot, that did not meet the 40' average setback required by the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan. Separate design review applications were approved for both buildings, though only the southern parcel was developed. The Specific Plan is in the process of being updated, and no zoning or land use changes are proposed for the project site or abutting parcels.

NeilMed Pharmaceuticals Inc. also owns the parcel to the northeast (APN 059-271-044), which is currently utilized for office and warehouse space, and the parcel directly east (APN 059-430-007), which is currently undeveloped. The proposed building will be accessed from the private road that is part of the northeastern NeilMed parcel.

PROJECT DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS

- Two-story 59,066-square foot building with a footprint of 29,533 square feet (44% lot coverage)
- Flat roof, 50' in height
- Two loading docks accessed from the front of the parcel
- Front façade features a central entrance with a canopy, a second floor balcony, and spandrel glass
- Exterior walls are composed of precast concrete panels in an earth-tone color scheme



## DISCUSSION

### **1. Parking**

#### *Minimum Parking*

The proposed site plan depicts 38 parking stalls on the subject parcel. The minimum required for the new use is 32. The project parcel and the parcel to the south were originally a single lot, prior to its subdivision in 1998. On the parcel map, temporary and permanent parking easements were placed on the project parcel in favor of the neighboring parcel. The permanent easements were required to meet the provision of parking necessary to approve the use on the neighboring parcel to the south. The permanent easements therefore encumber 15 of the existing parking stalls on the project site, which effectively removes these spaces from counting toward the required number for the proposed use. For that reason, the project is nine spaces short of the required 32.

Parking regulations in the Zoning Code allow for reductions in the required parking as follows:

- *Sec. 26-86-010(i): The above parking standards may be reduced when it has been satisfactorily demonstrated to the planning director or applicable decision-making body that fewer spaces will adequately serve the specific use or that the applicant has encouraged transit opportunities through one or more of the following:*
  - *Participation in a comprehensive travel demand management (TDM) program including, but not limited to, provision of flex-time, carpooling, and transit passes such that VMT generated by the project is reduced;*
  - *Provision of transit stops and/or turnouts developed in cooperation with and approved by Sonoma County Transit;*
  - *Provision of amenities for bicyclists, bus riders, carpoolers and pedestrians beyond those required by this section.*
- *Sec. 26-86-010(m): The parking required may be reduced by up to twenty percent (20%) of total required spaces when it has been satisfactorily demonstrated to the planning director or applicable decision-making body that:*
  - *Adequate parking for the projected use is provided such that the public health and safety is not compromised; and*
  - *That such design provides greater sustainability through the incorporation of amenities to encourage alternative modes of transportation and VMT reduction to offset GHG emissions from vehicle trips; and/or that*
  - *The reductions are required in order to implement Low Impact Development (LID) parking lot design, including onsite retention and treatment of stormwater.*
    - *Examples include the provision of electric vehicle charging stations, covered secured bike parking or bike lockers, showers and changing areas for employees, vegetated swales, and connections to Class I facilities. The parking required may be reduced by ten (10) percent when at least ten percent (10%) of the total spaces are provided as covered by solar panels. These reductions may be combined but the total reduction in the required number of parking spaces may not exceed twenty percent (20%).*



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Four of the proposed parking stalls would have electric vehicle charging stations and two stalls would be reserved for clean air vehicles or vanpool. Using Sec. 26-86-010(m), the required parking can be reduced by up to six spaces, for a total of 26. Even if the maximum reduction is permitted through the proposed amenities to promote sustainable modes of transportation, the project would still have a shortage of three spaces. Limiting the intensity of the use – thus the required parking – by reducing building floor area might be necessary to meet the minimum parking requirements.

#### *Stall Length*

Sec. 26-82-030(l) of the Zoning Code requires dimensions of 9 by 20 feet for standard parking stalls, and 8 by 16 feet for compact stalls. The proposed striping for standard stalls does not meet the minimum dimensions at 17 feet in length. At the planned building footprint, and with other constraints including landscaping requirements, minimum aisle widths, and setbacks, there is no space to extend the stall lengths. The Committee could consider the landscaped strips abutting most of the parking areas as extensions to the striped stall length to accommodate additional vehicle length. However, this option is not recommended for the six stalls abutting the sidewalk to the main entrance of the building as it would impact accessibility. Another option to meet the required stall length is to reduce the building's footprint to allow for the full striped length, which might nevertheless be unavoidable to accommodate the required number of stalls as discussed above.

#### *Access and Parking Orientation*

The applicant proposes access from the private road on the easterly side, with pull-in parking for passenger vehicles sited directly along the roadway. Passenger vehicle access to the proposed building would also be available through an existing access easement along the parking lot of the parcel south of the project site. General development standards in Sec. 26-82-030(q) of the Zoning Code instruct that, "except for parking areas accommodating three (3) or fewer vehicles, a car entering a street or highway can do so by traveling in a forward direction". With the proposed project, the private road would serve at least two parcels, not considering future development of the parcel directly east of the project site. After consultation with the Department of Transportation and Public Works, staff finds that the pull-in parking design is low-risk given that the road has minimal traffic and low speeds, and as long as vegetation does not obscure sight lines.

## **2. Landscaping**

On parcels designated as Industrial Park, the Airport Industrial Area Specific Plan requires a minimum of 20 percent of the site to be landscaped. The current site plan illustrates 20.3 percent of the site is reserved as landscaping. Two additional landscaping standards, which are not met by the proposed site plan, are as follows:

- *"All development sites within an MP district shall reserve a minimum 25-foot wide area (from the adjoining street curb line) to be used exclusively for landscaping. The owner, lessee, or occupant shall be responsible for landscaping and maintaining this area."*
- *"A minimum of 50 percent of the area between the curb line and the minimum building setback line shall be mounded and bermed and planted in lawn, or in a suitable substitute established in a landscape master plan approved by the Design Review Committee."*



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The parcel does not adjoin a public street, and instead is accessed by a private road that is part of a separate parcel. For development review purposes, the easterly property line is considered the front of the parcel because of the proposed orientation of the building and access to the site. If understanding the private road as the adjoining street, the proposed plan does not reserve a 25-foot wide area from the “curb line” for landscaping, and does not comply with the required mounding and berming. Instead, the area along the roadway is mostly proposed as parking and a landscaped buffer will border the front edge of the building. Mounding and berming are not present on the parcel to the south of the project site, but are utilized along the frontage of the other two parcels east of Skylane Boulevard on Aviation Boulevard.

Inverting the landscaping and parking orientation described by the Specific Plan and implemented by the parcel south of the project site impacts the cohesion between developments along the private road. The applicant has indicated that the intent for the site’s layout is to relate this parcel with the neighboring two NeilMed-owned parcels to create a campus-like design with connecting circulation. Staff recommends the Committee consider how the project’s proposed landscaping and parking orientation influence the continuity between current and future developments along the private road.

### 3. Building Height

The Specific Plan applies a 28-foot height limit between the 25-foot minimum and 40-foot average setback lines. The height criteria reads:

*“Structures shall not exceed 28 feet in height at any building setback line. Between the 25-foot minimum and 40-foot setback lines, structures shall not exceed 28 feet in height. For each foot of setback interior to the 40 foot building setback line, an additional 6 inches of building height shall be permitted; the total height shall not exceed 50 feet. Additional height may be permitted under stringent special use permit procedures only. Heating, cooling, and other roof equipment should be included in these building height restrictions.”*

In addition to the Design Review request, the applicant requests a Use Permit for a 50-foot building height. The proposal does not include rooftop equipment that would increase the total height above the 50-foot maximum. In comparison, the approved building height for the NeilMed building to the northeast is 25 feet and approximately 26 feet for the building on the lot south of the project site.

### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Committee provide preliminary feedback regarding the following:

- Site design, including access and circulation, parking requirements and stall dimensions, and landscaping
- Building design, including a request for additional height, and materials and colors
- Exterior lighting



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### Attachments

1. ☒ Applicant project statement
2. ☒ Project plan set, including landscaping and preliminary drainage plans
3. ☒ Assessor's parcel map
4. ☒ Parcel Map PLP98-0016
5. ☒ Materials and colors board
6. ☒ Lighting specifications
7. ☒ Photos of the site and surrounding area
8. ☒ Code References



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